

Field Worker: Glen Curd
May 10 '37

Interview with W. S. Hood (White)
709 South Jefferson St.
Hobart, Oklahoma

Born April 8, 1868
Summerville, Georgia

I was born April 8, 1868 at Summerville, Georgia. I came from there to Center, Oklahoma in 1891. I had a cousin at Center which was my main reason for coming out here.

I came by rail to Wister Junction. After a short visit with my cousin I secured a job working on the section. I had to board with the section boss or not work, and pay \$4 per week for board. The railroad then was 54 miles long from Wister Junction to McAlester. I stayed with the railroad about two months and came back to my cousins and while looking around found a job running a freight outfit from Center to all points close by.

M. Walsh and P. Duffy, Mercantile Business, were my employees. I would load up groceries and supplies and start to some other town. After I was unloaded I would pick up cotton and other farm produce that was available as Center was the closest trading point. While working with the firm the discussion came up about the opening of the Kiowa-Comanche and Caddo country for settlement. Mr. Duffy told me one day; he said "There isn't any use for you to try to make the run down there." I said, "Why?" "Well, you were born in the wrong state," said Mr. Duffy, "and the Rock Island Railroad Company is going to gobble up all that land down there and make a republic out of it." Just an idea that the people had in those days.

I never knew if that was ever suggested or not but I didn't make the drawing. But my brother-in-law, Curt Ludford, and a friend of his, T. N. McCurdy, made the run and both agreed if one got a claim and the other didn't they would split the profit and go elsewhere. So Ludford drew a claim but never moved on it, but sold out and split with McCurdy.

I kept on with freight wagons until 1908 when railroads took so much of the business that we couldn't operate.

My only experience with Indians is that I had forgotten my gun one trip while I was out with a load of freight. While I always had it along and slept with my gun under my head, I had traveled all day and stopped near a creek to make camp for the night. I got supper over with and about nine or ten o'clock that night of all the noise and yelling going on I never heard the like. I was down in a hollow and hills on either side but could hear the noise, and that kept up far into the morning but I surely was scared without my gun. I slept with a butcher knife in my hand all night long. I moved my bed to where I thought they wouldn't find me. By daylight everything had quieted down, so I resumed my journey. Then I realized I was lost, I had taken the wrong road or trail the evening before. When I topped the hill I could see I had camped close to an Indian camp which had been having a big powwow all night, so I asked two or three Indians where I was, and they said "no savvy" but I finally got to one that said pointing to east over that hill "white man live"

and that was all he would tell me. But I went over the hill and there I was in sight of Ada. White men lived there alright, but just an Indian's way of telling me.

After railroads were being built and most everybody had sold their freighting outfits I was at a little town of Vanoss, Oklahoma where they were extending the line to that town. We had a very wet spring that year and finally it got so wet that the trains just couldn't make the trip and a few families were getting hungry so a friend and I borrowed the company's hand car and went to Byers, Okla. for food for our families.